

us competitive, not States competitive with other States, but this country competitive with other countries.

I think it is also important if we can tie this chart in with that. I think it is also important that 395,000 students can be funded within a week of what we spend. I just know that financial aid officers at universities and at community colleges and at technical centers throughout the country are saying, wow, look at that number; 56,000 students could be funded per day. 56,000. Think about the kids that are paying student loans back that are having to go out and scratch and beg, and people that are punched in right now and grandparents and parents that have picked up an extra job to put their kids through school looking at these numbers as relates to this endless war, as the President sees it, in Iraq, we could actually help. And this is almost sad when it comes down to per hour. With the \$13.7 million that is being spent in Iraq per hour, 2,000 students could actually receive an education.

I am going to break out from the charts and the numbers. But if you look at the foreign-owned debt and you start looking at countries like Japan that are holding a great number of our debt at the 644-plus million dollars, I think it is important. We owe Japan this money, we owe China money, we owe the U.K. money, we owe OPEC countries money because of the mismanagement of the Bush administration and the former rubber-stamp Republican Congress. Our kids, our young people, our country have to compete economically, have to compete as it relates to the level of education so that we can have a workforce that is better than the countries that we have borrowed money from, and I am not proud of that at all.

Just to tie in that chart, and I will get back to that Iraq issue, this is what is happening here. You have seen this chart before. We have updated this chart. Since President Bush has been in office, it has doubled the foreign-held debt.

It took 42 Presidents 224 years to build up \$1 trillion in foreign-held debt. If you look, you have the pictures of the Presidents here, we are talking World War I, World War II, the Great Depression, you name it, a number of other wars that took place, the Civil War, and all of the conflicts that took place, and the hard financial times that the United States has gone through, these 42 Presidents combined, \$1.01 trillion. President Bush was elected, had a rubber-stamp Republican Congress, and they borrowed within 6 years, we are saying 6 years, more than 224 years of history and other financial challenges of the country, \$1.19 trillion. We are moving, Mr. Speaker, into a pay-as-you-go effort to be able to knock that down, and we are passing budgets that will get us back into.

Back to the cost of Iraq. And me being a former State trooper, Mr. Speaker and Members, I think this is

important. Look, we know by now and we can see because I have said it about five times, the per-year, the per-month, the per-day, and the per-hour costs of the war in Iraq.

The per year at \$120 billion, we can actually hire in this country 2.6 million police officers that could be community police officers to prevent crime, that could be officers that can enforce the law in high-crime areas, officers that can go out and do the things that they need to do to make this country safer. In one month that it costs us in Iraq, 221,000 officers could be hired. In one week in Iraq, 51,000 officers.

I am talking about folks that are in local communities that are literally under lockdown in urban and rural areas in the United States that are trying to protect their families and maybe have one or two State troopers in an entire county or State police officer in a parish or in an urban area. I represent down in Miami where you can go for a little while before you see a law enforcement officer. And to learn in one day that you can hire 7,000 police officers that it costs in Iraq, for the lack of the COPS bill that has been destroyed under the Bush administration and the past Republican Congress, that we are pushing in our past appropriations bills that we have passed thus far to rekindle that program so that we can have community policing, something that sheriffs, something that city police chiefs, something that local communities enjoy, because they prevent crime before it happens. And the per-hour cost, \$3.7 million in Iraq per hour, could fund 304 police officers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it takes a lot of courage, it takes a lot of backbone to come to this floor to make sure that we do what the American people have asked us to do in making sure that we provide opportunities for local communities to fund the necessary needs that they have.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished Member from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, continuing along the lines of what Congressman MEEK has been speaking about, I sat behind him and he did not know that I was there. I thought that it would be helpful if I would join my very good friend, who is a member of the 30-somethings, and have him know that those of us that are the over 30-somethings have the exact same sentiments as it pertains to the circumstances as exist in our respective communities because of the Iraq war.

Representative MEEK, I wish to just bring to the table one example. I won't use the many in the congressional district that I am privileged to represent which abuts your district, and we have overlapping circumstances in a variety of our communities in South Broward and North Dade, and in this case I am going to carry it way west to the Everglades.

For the last 7 years, I have been about the business of trying to get a water treatment plant in Belle Glade, Florida for the people of Belle Glade, South Bay, Pahokee, and that general area. I won't even talk about the hospital; I won't even talk about the police that you have already talked about that we have tried to get. And so I thought, well, certainly now that we have political circumstances that are favorable to the majority, that it would be very easy to get a water treatment plant.

Now, you and I know this: we know that in Iraq we have paid for water treatment facilities that have been blown up. We know that we have paid for sewers that the materials were stolen. And we know that we are building an embassy, I guess we are building an embassy, at more money that I can ever contemplate that must have a big bull's eye on it, but we are not sure who is building it. We know about no-bid contracts. We know about millions of dollars being poured into this situation while our communities are suffering. Now, something is wrong with this picture.

I heard you loud and clear regarding the extraordinary debt. And I don't mean to take much of your time, I came down here to file this bill, but I could not resist. And I yield back to my very good friend from Florida.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Congressman HASTINGS, I am so glad that you did come down and that you did share your sentiments. And you are right, the point that we are trying to make here is that we are going to have to bring an end to this war as we see it now.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is also important for all of the Members on both sides of the aisle to realize that, especially under the pay-as-you-go philosophy that we have adopted as the House in the majority and the Senate has adopted, that things are going to be hard back home as it relates to getting Federal appropriations back to our districts.

There is really no need for us to be here if we can't bring resources back, if we can't represent the people that woke up early one Tuesday morning for representation to provide not only voice here in Congress but also action. And without money, it is hard to bring about that kind of action.

I think it is also, Mr. Speaker, very important that Members do note that many of the U.S. Governors, and I am not just talking about Democratic Governors, mainly Republican Governors, that have raised the issue with the Federal commitment to the States, the devolution of taxation that has been taking place over the last 6 years, especially under the Bush administration.

I just want to break that down a little further where taxes, quote/unquote, have been cut here for the very wealthy here in Washington prior to the Democratic Congress getting here, and that responsibility with the lack of